Vorfh Eastern Council in Assam

2355. SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased io slate :

(a) whether it is a fact that 25 years ago Government had established North Eastern Council in Guwahati in Aslant Stat: ;

(b) if so. what are the basic objectives in establishing the Council ;

(c) whether any review has been made to know how far the objectives have been achieved ; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P, M. SAYEED): (a) The North Eastern Council (NEC) was established in 1972 at Shillong under the North Eastern Council Act, 1971.

(b) The basic objectives and functions for which the NEC was set up has been inter alia to advise and make recommenda tions and also implement projects which tire regional and inter-state in nature in the of economic and social planning, transport and communication;;, power etc. for overall balanced development and security of the North Eastern area.

(c) and (d) The North Easte; n Council is a high level statutory body with the Governors and Chief Ministers of the North Eastern States as its Members. The Council reviews its activities in its meetings. The Council has held 38 meetings since its inception in August, 1972. The Council has fund d schemes for over Rs. 2197 cores since its inception for construction and improvement of roads, hydro-electric projects and transmission lines, human resource development, agriculture and social and community services etc.

Recognising the services of Freedom Fighters

2356. SHRI EHUPINDP.R SINGH MANN: WiD the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of freedom fighters as are yet pending to be recognised by Gov-ernracn! for their services rendered during the freedom struggle ;

(h) by when the:r requests would be ^on>:dered : and

(c) the reasons for not considering their requests so far ?

It';' MIN'ISTF.R OF STATE IN I MINISTRY OF HOMF AFFAIRS (SHRI P. M. SAYEED) : (al to (c) As a token of the Nation's gratitude and in recognition of the services rendered by ihe fft fighters during the freedom straggle, 'he Central Government grants the freedom fighters' pension to the persons who fulfil the eligibility criteria laid down under the Swatantrata Sainik Samman Pension Scheme. Ail timely claims for grant of pension have been considered at Last once and appropriate decisions already communicated lo the applicants. Aggrieved with the decision of the Government regarding rejection of claims, the applicants keen on sending review petitions"representations. If the applicants furnish some additional acceptable documentary evidence along with such review petitions, such cases are reconsidered and pension sanctioned. As on 30-11-1994, only 17 fresh claims received recently were pending. While every possible effort is made to communicate the decision to the applicants on their claims in the shortest possible time, receipt and disposal of claims for pension even after the out of date being a continuous process, no definite time frame can be laid down tor disposal of claims for pension.

Report of Human Rights Watch Group

2357. MISS SAROI KHAPAKDE: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS h-pleased to state :

fa) whether the International "Human Rights Watch Group" has recently observed ihe militants and their supports in Jammu and Kashmir of grave violation of international humanitarian law by killing Government servants, civilians, member? of minority community and using religious places for militant activities, as per the newsitem in the Hindustan Times, dated 23rd November. 1994. entitled: "Human Rights Group Indicts I & *K* Militants, for violations" :

(b) if so, the facts in this regard • and

(c) what is the reaction of ihe Central Government in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): fa) and fb) Human Rights Watch/Asia, in its report titled \ : ARMS AND ABUSES IN INDIAN PUNJAB AND KASHMIR" has observed. inter-alia, that diffusion of cdvanced small arms and weapons to th/> militants by the Pakistan Inter-Service* Intelligence (ISI) through the "Afghan Pipeline" has seriously affected the human rights situation in Puniab and Kashmir. It has fttrther observed that most of these weanons transferred by Pakistan to Afghan Mujahideen have resurfaced in the hands of militants in Punjab and Kashmir which has led to serious violations of international !:i".s of war including direct attacks on unarmed civilians, indiscriminate attacks, summary executions and kidnappings,

(c) The Government have consistently been bringing to the notice of international